

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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## A Number System for Genealogies

WARREN R. GOOD

Various Mennonite family histories have yielded records that were needed for my work on the descendants of Jacob Good (c. 1750-1803) and Frances Grow, his second wife. These histories—Beery, Brenneman, Funk, Heatwole, etc.—use several different number systems to cross-index the families, but the most popular scheme, apparently, carries above each family record a line similar to this:

*No. 562. Sixth Generation, 231.*

The line indicates that the family is the 562nd in the book, and descends immediately from No. 231. In each family record the number for the new family of a married son or daughter appears after the birth date, showing the reader where to find the continuation.

The principal defects of this system are that (1) the numbers cannot be assigned until virtually all the records are collected, (2) any marriage or delayed report obtained after the numbers are assigned upsets the numbering if closely related families are to be kept together, and (3) the system does not readily indicate a person's complete descent in the line or his relationship to other members of the family. The first objection, the lack of a code system for keeping records in order during the process of collection, is a serious one; and derangements of the system caused by getting new records after numbers are assigned has caused the introduction of fractional numbers, ending in halves and quarters, as well as miscellaneous out-of-place records in the back of the book.

A natural number system for genealogies gives cross references, generation, complete descent in the line, and relationships all in a single number. Each part of the number is functional, automatic, and permanent. The system is based on the order in which the children are born, and children in each family are numbered consecutively, as in all genealogies. The original head of the line being studied does not have a number; but his children's families, the second generation, carry the numbers 1, 2, 3, and so on. Families of the children of No. 1 become No. 11, No. 12, and so on; and their children become Nos. 111, 112, . . . and 121, 122, . . . Numbers for those who remain single or die early in life are simply discontinued. My own number in the genealogy of

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D. J. JOHNS

## D. J. Johns: Clinton Frame Bishop and Mennonite Leader

Daniel J., son of John Johns and Catharine (Yoder) Johns, was born in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, September 8, 1850. At the age of fifteen he moved with his parents to Lagrange County, Indiana, where he grew to manhood. When he was nineteen he began teaching country school, which occupation he successfully followed for seven years.

On May 6, 1875, he was united in marriage with Nancy Yoder. To this union six children were born, five sons and one daughter: Elmer, Ira, Ora, Luella, Otis and Ray. Ora D. died February 18, 1885. Elmer H. died April 15, 1902.

In the summer of 1876 he accepted Christ as his personal Saviour and in September, 1876, he united with the Amish Mennonite Church and worshiped with the Clinton Frame Congregation, where on May 28, 1882, he was ordained a minister of the gospel and on November 13, 1887, to the office of bishop. He spent considerable time in the evangelistic field in his early ministry. He served on several of the church boards and on numerous committees. He was a member of the Publishing Committee of the Mennonite

## Early Amish Settlers in Indiana and Clinton Frame Church History

IRA S. JOHNS

One hundred and two years ago something took place among the Amish of Somerset County, Pennsylvania, which was to have great significance in future years. In fact, our meeting here tonight\* is the direct result of the thinking of those men a century ago. It was decided that several men should make a tour of investigation. The men who made the trip were Daniel S. Miller, Preacher Joseph Miller, Nathan Smeily and Joseph Speicher. It was in the year 1840 that these four Amish brethren set out for the West. They first went to Pittsburgh, from where they took a boat down the Ohio River. They went by boat all the way to Cairo, Illinois, whence they proceeded along the Mississippi to Burlington, Iowa. Then they traveled by foot through Henry, Washington, and Johnson counties in Iowa. Returning through Illinois they stopped at a small town called Chicago, where they crossed Lake Michigan and entered the St. Joseph River by boat. The latter part of their trip to Indiana they made on foot. The land around Goshen appealed strongly to them. With a favorable report on Elkhart County, Indiana, they returned to Somerset County, Pennsylvania. It should be mentioned in passing that Elkhart County was in those days still nearly all wooded except for the Elkhart Prairie southeast of Goshen. But these four men were able to choose good land, as indeed Mennonites and Amish usually do. It would have been most interesting to listen in on the conversations which took place when these men returned to their Pennsylvania friends.

The next year four families left Somerset County for Elkhart County. The party consisted of the following twenty-four souls: Daniel S. and Barbara Miller with five children; Preacher Joseph and Elisabeth Miller with four children; Deacon Joseph and Barbara Borntrager with five children; and Christian and

Publication Board a long time, and a member of the committee to arrange for the first General Conference. He was a pioneer in our educational work. Many were his failures and many were his blessings. [He died May 22, 1942]—Based on two brief autobiographical sketches.

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Elisabeth Borntrreger with two children. They took along only what they thought was absolutely necessary, undoubtedly doing without many things which we think we must have. They started off in four large wagons and two smaller ones. They traveled with wagons because railroads were not yet built. They stopped for one week in Holmes County, Ohio, then proceeded to Elkhart County by way of Michigan. They spent their last night at White Pigeon, Michigan. In those days, of course, roads were not marked and travelers had to depend on sun and compass for directions. Most of the streams in those days had to be forded. I have often wondered how they managed to live along the way. I remember hearing my wife's folks tell how they moved when my father-in-law was five weeks old and weighed but five pounds.

The Somerset party arrived in Goshen on June 29, 1841, having been on the road twenty-six days, according to Borntrreger. They settled down on the Elkhart prairie a few miles southeast of Goshen. There they lived in small huts for several months. At the end of the summer they decided that the prairie land was too expensive, so they went farther east to the timbered land. Joseph Miller and Joseph Borntrreger bought land in Clinton Township. Joseph Miller's land, between two and three hundred acres in extent, was bought from a man named Martin Boyles, who earlier had bought it from the government. President Martin van Buren had signed the papers. My own farm is now a part of the Miller tract. Joseph Borntrreger was the great-grandfather of Mose Bontrager who is with us this evening. Incidentally, when Mrs. Miller signed the paper, when the Millers sold eighty acres from their tract, she could but make her mark. Daniel S. Miller and Christian Borntrreger went sixteen miles to the northeast and settled in Newbury Township, Lagrange County.

Joseph Miller was ordained to the ministry before locating in Elkhart County. He was the first Amish minister in Indiana. Isaac Schmucker was another early Amish minister in Indiana, having been ordained to the ministry in Ohio. Isaac was the grandfather of Jesse Smucker. Jesse's father, Jonathan Smucker, was also ordained; he was successively ordained as deacon, minister, and bishop. Incidentally, Isaac Schmucker later served the church in Illinois, in McLean County, and was instrumental in building the first Amish Mennonite meetinghouse in America. That occurred about 1848 or 1850.

The first Amish church service in Indiana was an Easter service, held March 27, 1842, in the home of Preacher Joseph Miller. The church then had fourteen members, since other settlers had by that time arrived. Church services were held biweekly thereafter.

At first all the services were held in German, of course. The first English preaching in the Clinton Frame Church was done in 1882 by D. J. Johns. Very frequently Johns would preach in Ger-

man for a while, then change to English and preach the same message again. The last German sermon was preached in this meetinghouse about 1922.

In 1892 D. D. Troyer was ordained to the ministry. Later Silas Yoder was also ordained to the ministry. Ira S. Johns was ordained deacon and later minister. Clyde Kauffman was ordained to the ministry to serve in Michigan. And David Yontz was ordained as deacon.

It is not known when the first Clinton Frame meetinghouse was built. My father thought perhaps about 1850. [It was probably in the latter part of the decade, 1850-60.] The present building, which stands just south of the site of the old building, was erected in 1888.

The early Sunday schools were quite different from those of today. The earliest Sunday school which I attended was at the Forks Church. But I was too young to remember much about it. When I was a child we went to Sunday school barefoot. We had no Sunday-school lesson quarterlies, but we enjoyed Sunday school all the same. The first superintendent at Clinton Frame was Peter Blough, uncle of Amos Blough. The assistant was Herman Yoder. The first chorister was Christian Yoder. A Brother Blough was chorister for a long time, too; also some Schrocks. In the early days there was opposition to Sunday schools on the part of some members of the congregation. And Sunday school was held only during the summer months, never in winter. The first Sunday-school conference was held in the year 1892 in the Clinton Frame Church. S. F. Coffman spoke at that conference on the Evergreen Sunday School. I believe that from that point we began having Sunday school the year round. Young people's meetings were started at about the same time. On one occasion C. Z. Yoder got up and said, "We will all remember that there will be services here tonight, and the text word is 'Love.' Have a verse with the word, 'Love.'" For fifty years since that time we have been having a text word in our Y.P.M. services.

Sunday-school attendance fluctuated considerably in the early days. More people attended on those Sundays on which church services were to be held. Furthermore, some people would not participate in the Sunday-school service; they were the so-called "spectators." One of my own teachers whom I remember was A. C. Mehl; I can still remember some of the things which he told us.

The day finally came when the Amish Mennonites and the Mennonites merged. The two Indiana-Michigan conferences held their first joint session in 1917.

Another impressive meeting which I recall was held during the first World War; it consisted of the boys who were in the draft. The way the young men expressed themselves at that time made quite an impression on me.

As to the future, the outlook is just what we make it. The future of this congregation hangs on its loyalty. In the past it has been loyal. Upon our young peo-

ple, our middle-aged people and our ministers is going to depend the future of this congregation.

\*An address originally given at the Hundredth Anniversary Services held at the Clinton Frame Church, April 5, 1942. Re-written for the BULLETIN.

## More About the School at Ada

J. B. SMITH

It seems unfortunate that some important omissions occurred in the article of Brother Silvanus Yoder in the March and June 1942, issues of the BULLETIN. In naming students (Mennonite) who were among the first of our people attending Ohio Normal University the Blossers (John and Noah) should have been included, also Paul Whitmer who was prominent in literary society circles, Christ Hiltz of New Stark, a prominent worker there, Dr. B. Frank Thut of Elida, the Eby brothers of Bluffton, one of whom, Dr. I. L. Eby, is now located at Goshen. Several of these graduated from O. N. U.

It should also be mentioned that other and longer courses were offered at Ada than the Teacher's Course, namely the Classical Course and the Philosophy Course, leading to the A.B. and Ph.B. degrees respectively. The school year at Ada was forty-nine weeks in length. The Classical Course was three school years in length and the Philosophy Course, four years.

It would also have been of interest to have told of the meetings which John S. Coffman held in the Mennonite mission (conducted by Mennonite students at Ada) in the town and of his conducting chapel in the university while in Ada. Professor Darst, instructor in English, a fine scholar and a real gentleman, was impressed with the personality and delivery of Brother Coffman and this led him to send his own son to Goshen College in recognition of the high standards of character and moral principles among Mennonites.

It should also be mentioned that Dr. Thut, who lived near Ada, attended the university there until his graduation and for years had close association with some of the professors. It was always a pleasure for one of the teachers, Professor Willis, to eat a good country supper in a New Stark Mennonite home. Later Willis was governor of Ohio; he died as he was about to make his first campaign speech for the presidency of the United States.

## NUMBER SYSTEM FOR GENEALOGIES

(Continued from page 1)

Jacob Good and Frances Grow is 672-23; and my ancestors in the line, therefore, have the numbers 6, 67, 672, and 672-2; and my children are 672-231 and 672-232.

The family records are arranged in numerical order as they are collected, and are thus kept in order of relationship by

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generations. The fact that a child has grown up and married is indicated by a star (\*) after his birth date, and the reader is thus automatically referred to the new family number; for example, the family of the fifth child of No. 273-2 will be found under No. 273-25. Here is an imaginary sample record:

873. HARTMAN.—Magdalena Good (born Mar. 8, 1829, near Dale Enterprise, Va.; died Jan. 16, 1903, near Elida, O.), married William Hartman (born May 20, 1826, near Broadway, Va.; died Aug. 13, 1899, near Elida, O.), on Sept. 5, 1849, at Harrisonburg, Va. They moved to Allen Co., O., in 1855. Farmer. Mennonite. Elida, Ohio.

1. Joseph Henry, May 22, 1851-Feb. 6, 1852.
2. Frances Elizabeth, Mar. 3, 1853.\*
3. Noah Daniel, Jan. 20, 1855-Oct. 17, 1932 (single).
4. Samuel Edward, Nov. 8, 1856.\*

The record shows immediately that Magdalena was a great-granddaughter of the head of the line, her grandparent was No. 8, her parent was No. 87, and she was the third child in the family. The number for her daughter Frances is 873-2. Clearly, No. 82 was her uncle (or aunt), and No. 873-45 is her grandchild, through Samuel.

More remote kinship is easily determined, for one needs only to compare the numbers. Consider this example: 672-23 and 837-52. Since 6 and 8 were siblings (children of the same parents), 67 and 83 were first cousins, 672 and 837 were second cousins, and so on. To determine the relationship, place an X between the first different figures in the two numbers, and dots between the following pairs; then the X denotes siblings and the number of dots indicates the order of consanguinity. Hence these two are fourth cousins.

In this second example, 528-693 is a first-cousin-once-removed of 528-52.

528-693  
— x\*  
528-52

Similarly, 275-832 is a third-cousin twice-removed of 942-6; and 346-231 is a second-cousin-once-removed of 342-27, as the reader may easily verify.

The number 6(11)3-7 gives the 11 in parentheses to show that the person's grandparent was an eleventh child. The parentheses are used in preference to a style that has appeared in at least one family history: that of following the nine digits with a, b, c, and so on, making the ninth child No. 9 and the tenth No. a. It seems more sensible, and not too inconvenient, to make the tenth No. 10.

Some progress toward the number system described here has been indicated in a few published family histories but, so far as I know, none of them embodies more than one or two of the many advantages that are inherent in this system. It is suggested that genealogists feel welcome to make full use of the plan.

### NEWS & NOTES

One of the weaknesses of many genealogies is their numbering system. The family histories prepared by A. J. Fretz, for example, require time and energy for tracing a genealogical line in either direction. The BULLETIN is most happy to present to its readers a new method of numbering for family histories. This method is simple and reliable. New discoveries made after some numbers have been assigned are the occasion of no difficulty whatever.

The author of the new numbering system is Professor Warren R. Good of the School of Education in the University of Michigan. The residence of Professor Good is 1407 Brooklyn Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mr. Good, himself a scion of a Virginia Mennonite family, is at present working on the genealogy of a branch of the Good family. We appreciate his contribution to the BULLETIN.

In this issue J. B. Smith, Elida, Ohio, brings some more light on the support at one time given Ohio Normal University, Ada, Ohio, by Mennonites. Attention should be called to the fact that the Mennonite boys at Ada in the early days of Mennonite interest in missions were active in conducting a mission in Ada. Who can tell more of that work?

John Blosser is mentioned by J. B. Smith as being a Mennonite student at Ada many years ago. In later years Blosser served long as a leader in the Mennonite Church. For many years he was president of the Mennonite Board of Education.

The work of John Horsch is done. For more than fifty years he was actively interested in Mennonite history. Directly or indirectly most of the young men in the American Mennonite Church who are today interested in Mennonite history, owe their interest to Horsch. How happy we all are, therefore, to see his posthumous work, *Mennonites in Europe*, appear. Read S. C. Yoder's review on page four of this issue.

We are happy to publish an interesting article by Ira S. Johns, son of the late Bishop D. J. Johns, minister in the Clinton Frame Mennonite Church near Goshen, Indiana, and secretary of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference. The author has relied for part of his information on an Amish booklet published in 1907.

In 1904 an Amish brother named Hans E. Borntrager began to investigate the settlement of the Amish in Elkhart County, Indiana. He completed his investigation in 1907 and published it under the imposing title, *Eine Geschichte der ersten Ansiedlung der Amischen Mennoniten*

und die Gründung ihrer ersten Gemeinde im Staate Indiana nebst Einer kurzen Erklärung über die Spaltung die in dieser Gemeinde geschehen ist. Translated the title reads, "A History of the first Settlement of the Amish Mennonites and the Founding of their First Congregation in the State of Indiana, together with a Brief Explanation of the Division which took place in this Congregation." The booklet of 24 pages was published by the Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana, in 1907.

Borntrager's booklet is of great value historically. He gives the names of many early settlers, together with the time of their arrival and their former home. He tells, for example, of the coming of Emanuel Miller and wife from Ohio to Lagrange County, Indiana, in October, 1841. Later came Preacher Isaac Schmucker, Jacob Kaufmann, Israel Miller and Jonas Hochstetler—all with their wives [and children, no doubt]. In the spring of 1842 the following eight families came from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and settled in Lagrange County: Abraham Herschberger, Joseph and Johann Herschberger, Heinrich and Hans Miller, Philip Weirich, Christian Hochstetler and David Lehmann. In the fall of 1842 eight more Amish families settled in Indiana, coming from Holmes County, Ohio, and settling in Elkhart County: Johann Miller, Joseph J. Miller, Jonas Miller, David H. Miller, Eli Tschoppen, Velti Yoder, David Schragen and Deacon Peter Schragen.

By the fall of 1842 there were therefore at least two Amish preachers and two deacons in Indiana: Preachers Joseph Miller and Isaac Schmucker, and Deacons Joseph Borntrager and Peter Schragen. All four had been ordained in either Pennsylvania or Ohio. In 1843 a lot was cast between the two ministers and Isaac Schmucker was ordained bishop, the first Amish bishop in Indiana. The next ordination was that of Jonas Hochstetler who was chosen a preacher in 1844.

In the fall of 1843 more Pennsylvania Amish settled in Lagrange, among whom were Preacher Hans Borntrager and Johann C. Yoder.

Soon the Amish had their troubles. It concerned the matter of the "alte Ordnung" (discipline). The Pennsylvania Amish could not agree with their Ohio brethren. Isaac Schmucker led the Ohio faction (as sole minister at first) and ordained the following: Joseph J. Miller as preacher and Velti Yoder as deacon. The division took place about the year 1845. Through the mediation of three Amish ministers from Ohio the schism was healed in 1847. The Ohio arbitrators were Moses Miller, Peter Gerber, and Jacob Koblensz.

Joseph J. Miller, ordained a minister in the Ohio faction, had his full share of (Continued on page 4)

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Mennonites in Europe.* By JOHN HORSCH, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania. Mennonite Publishing House, 1942. pp. 425, Illustrated, Cloth \$2.00.

For many years there has been a real need of a comprehensive history of the Mennonites in Europe. Much of the material in this field has been covered in the past by articles in periodicals and in addresses delivered on various occasions, part of which was published in some form or other. It remained for the author of the book under review to bring this material together in a convenient form and by additions and elaborations present an authentic history of a group of Christians that until recent years has been little known and much misunderstood.

The author's early interest in his own people led him into correspondence with some of the outstanding historians of his native land as well as with those of other countries where the Anabaptists and Mennonites had their origin. This research and study led him to the archives and libraries in Germany, Switzerland, France, and Holland, and continued during his long lifetime. It came to an end only with his death after the manuscript of this volume was completed but before it was published.

The book covers the entire field of European Mennonitism. It is divided into four parts. The first deals with pre-Reformation conditions of Christianity in Europe, and with the movements that led away from the established Church. Part Two treats of the causes that led to the separation from the state church and the rise and growth of the Anabaptists and Mennonites. This section deals also with the leading figures in that great movement as well as with the later migrations of large groups to America, Russia, Canada, and finally to parts of Latin America. Part Three deals with the life, the faith, the character and spirit of this evangelical group. Part Four consists of the following appendices: A. Palatine Mennonite Family Names. B. Influence of Mennonites on Other Denominations. C. Halfway Mennonites. D. A Notable Testimony to the Life of the Mennonites of Switzerland in the 17th Century.

The author makes no use of footnotes but there are a number of pages of helpful notes and references on the text. There is also bibliography which contains a selected list of the most important books and articles on the subject. The list comprises publications in the German, Dutch and English languages, and will be found useful by those who wish to continue their study.

Another feature of this work is the list of illustrations made from old plates and cuts showing scenes of Mennonite life

and worship and of their trials and persecutions. This section also presents a number of early Mennonite leaders.

The book is a fitting conclusion to the labors of the author who has brought together in this volume the result of a lifetime of painstaking study and years of research. He has drawn this material from the riches of his knowledge and experience and embodied it in this volume as his final testimony in behalf of the cause he loved and served for so many years.

S. C. Yoder.

## NEWS AND NOTES

(Continued from page 3)

vicissitudes. He lost his ministry in 1851. The next year he was re-ordained through the use of the lot. And in 1853 he was ordained as bishop, only to be silenced in 1861.

Before the middle of the century the Amish of Indiana were divided into two congregation or districts: Lagrange and Clinton. The Clinton group ordained Johann Reber to the ministry about the year 1847, as one gathers from Borntrager's booklet. In 1848 Joseph Miller was ordained bishop in Lagrange. But the population was fluid. Reber later moved to Iowa; Isaac Schmucker removed to Illinois. And in 1851 Preachers Moses Kaufmann and Christian Plank of Ohio located with the Clinton group. The next year Johann C. Yoder was chosen deacon in the Lagrange district. In February Deacon Sebastian Borntrager located in Lagrange also. And in April, 1854, came Preacher Jonas Troyer from Ohio and located in the Clinton district.

Jonas Troyer was an able speaker and wielded a strong influence. He was however of more liberal turn of mind than the bulk of his ministerial colleagues. From the first, it would seem, he manifested tolerance toward certain innovations and infractions of the "old order." The leaders who stood with him were Christian Plank, Christian Miller, and Johann Schmeily. The schism began to form in the Clinton district but soon spread to Lagrange also. Troyer, the progressive leader, was ordained bishop by Isaac Schmucker the very year of his arrival in Indiana. Troyer also introduced baptism in running water (in an outdoor stream or creek). By 1854 the schism was complete. Troyer's group of Amish Mennonites also began to build meetinghouses, contrary to Amish practice.

From Troyer's group two schisms were later to break: one conservative and one more liberal.

The Old Order Amish are still strong in Elkhart County, Indiana. Indeed the group they represent are the fastest growing Mennonite body in America today.

Borntrager gives a list of the eight Amish leaders who stood true to the Old Order: Joseph Miller, Hans Borntrager, Joseph J. Miller, Jonas Hochstetler, Moses Kaufmann, Tobias Yoder, Johann C. Yoder and Sebastian Borntrager.

In 1937 A. Warkentin of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, published a valuable book entitled, *Who's Who Among the Mennonites*. The book contained "over 500 life sketches of individuals in responsible positions." Readers of the BULLETIN will be delighted to learn that a second edition of the Mennonite *Who's Who* is to be published in 1942; it is now being prepared by A. Warkentin and Melvin Gingerich with the assistance of numerous Mennonite leaders. This new *Who's Who* will contain about 1,000 biographical sketches of Mennonites of all branches of the denomination. Readers are urged to cooperate with the authors in supplying information they may be called upon to give.

## How to Get on the Mailing List for the Bulletin

New readers for the MENNOMITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN are always welcome. If your name is not already on the mailing list for receiving the Bulletin regularly, consider this to be an invitation to send in your name and address with remittance to the treasurer of the *Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference*, Edward Yoder, Scottsdale, Pa. The Historical Committee is sponsoring the Church-wide Mennonite Historical Association, and all interested persons who pay the one dollar annual membership fee of the Association will receive an annual membership card and will also receive the four issues of the BULLETIN published during the year. Those who remit now will be enrolled as members for 1943 and will receive the December, 1942, issue of the BULLETIN free. Send in your fee of one dollar now and become a regular reader of the MENNOMITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN.

The Historical Committee urges those who are already regular readers of the BULLETIN to invite and solicit others to become regular readers. Sample copies for handing out to others will be gladly sent upon request. Or, send in the names and addresses of persons you know, who should become acquainted with the BULLETIN, and a sample copy will be sent to them.

Among those who have lately sent in their fee for membership in the Historical Association, thereby becoming regular readers of the BULLETIN are Wilmer Swope, Leetonia, Ohio; A. J. Miller, Windom, Kansas; Lorenz G. Schumm, 302 C. St., La Porte, Indiana; J. C. Fretz, Kitchener, Ontario. We welcome all these on our list of readers and supporters of the Historical Association.

Many of the regular readers have sent in their dues for the year 1942. A number have not yet done so. Let this be a reminder to you, in case you have overlooked this matter, to send in the one dollar for this year's dues.

